

For immediate release
April 26, 2005

MAY 6 DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM

May 6, 2005 is the deadline to apply for the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF) of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The USIBWC is seeking applications from community members interested in serving on the LRGCF Board. The LRGCF was established in 2003 to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

The LRGCF is intended to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, government agencies, irrigation districts, municipalities, and other interested parties. Duties and responsibilities will include reviewing and commenting on technical documents and activities associated with USIBWC projects in the area.

The LRGCF currently has 12 board members. All board terms are expiring so the USIBWC has decided to open the application process to the general public. Incumbent board members who wish to continue their service are eligible for re-appointment.

The board conducts regular public meetings in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, approximately four times per year, to discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects including the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project, Morillo Drain, and Mexico's deficit in water deliveries to the United States. Board members are expected to serve a two-year term and to attend all meetings. Participation in the Citizens' Forum is strictly

voluntary and members will not be financially compensated.

Members of the public who would like an application for the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum can contact the USIBWC Lower Rio Grande Projects Office at 956-565-3150 or Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener at sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov. The application and additional information are also available at: www.ibwc.state.gov/PAO/CURPRESS/2005/LRGCFApp.pdf. Applications are due May 6, 2005 so that Board Members can be selected prior to the next public meeting on June 28.

For more information:

Sally Spener
915-832-4175
sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov

Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum

Background

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) is seeking applications from individuals interested in serving on the Board of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF), a group established to promote the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. LRGCF meetings are open to the public and act as a focal point for the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the local community regarding ongoing and future USIBWC projects in the area. The LRGCF is intended to bring together community members enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, government agencies, municipalities, etc. The LRGCF Board currently has 11 members representing diverse interests; the terms of all Board Members are expiring. The Board meets regularly in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, approximately four times per year, to discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects. Board members serve as volunteers and are not reimbursed for expenses.

How to Become a Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum Member

Application forms (scroll down) should be submitted by May 6, 2005 in order for board selection to be completed before the next board meeting scheduled for June 28. Board members to the LRGCF will be selected by the USIBWC in consideration of the agency's interest in encouraging participation by diverse interests. Please return your completed application to: Sally Spener, USIBWC, 4171 N. Mesa, C-100, El Paso, TX 79902 or fax: 915-832-4195. If you have any questions, please contact Sally Spener at 915-832-4175 or sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov. Additional information about the USIBWC is available at www.ibwc.state.gov.

**APPLICATION
LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES SECTION**

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone numbers (including area code): Work: _____ Home: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail address: _____

PART I: INTERESTS AND CONCERNS (attach additional sheets as necessary)

This portion of the form will give the USIBWC a more accurate idea of your interests and concerns regarding USIBWC activities in the area.

1. Are you affiliated with any group? If so, please list the group(s) and any positions held.

2. Do you have any interests in or concerns about specific USIBWC activities? If so, please elaborate.

3. Would you be interested in being on a mailing list to receive fact sheets and meeting notices from the USIBWC about its programs?

_____ Yes, I would like to be on the mailing list.

PART II: PARTICIPATION IN THE CITIZENS' FORUM

Board members of the Citizens' Forum are expected to serve a 2-year term and to attend all meetings. Members who miss two or more consecutive meetings may be asked to resign. Duties and responsibilities will include reviewing and commenting on technical documents and activities associated with USIBWC activities in the project area. Board members will be expected to be available to the public to facilitate the exchange of information and/or concerns between the community and the Forum. Participation in the Citizens' Forum is strictly voluntary and members will not be financially compensated nor will expenses be reimbursed. Board members will be chosen by a USIBWC selection panel and will be representative of the diverse interests of the community.

Those who do not serve directly on the Citizens' Forum Board may still participate in activities. Interested members of the community will be included on the mailing list and will be invited to attend Forum meetings, which are open to the public. The public will be able to comment at the Forum meetings during a time set aside for public comments and input.

NOTE: Priority for Citizens' Forum Board membership will be given to local residents, groups or organizations which could be directly affected by USIBWC activities.

1. Please state why you would like to be considered for Citizens' Forum membership.

2. Please describe your experience working as a member of a diverse group with common goals.

3. Non-USIBWC members of the Forum Board will select a community co-chairperson. Please indicate if you are interested in being the community co-chairperson by checking on the line below.

_____ Yes, I would like to be considered.

4. If you responded yes to question 3, please state why you would be interested in being the community co-chairperson.

5. By submitting this signed application, you:
 - are aware that being a Citizens' Forum Board member will involve a set time commitment;
 - understand that being a Citizens' Forum Board member entails a willingness to work cooperatively with other members to ensure the efficient and effective use of time;
 - understand that serving on the Citizens' Forum will be voluntary and that members will not receive compensation for this service; and,
 - understand the following Privacy Act information regarding providing your name, address and telephone number for this survey:

PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

Authority: 5 USC § 552a and 22 USC § 277

Principal Purpose: To identify members of the local community who are interested in participation in the Citizens' Forum.

Routine Uses: The requested information will be used to develop a list of interested persons from which the community members of the Citizens' Forum will be selected. The information will also be used by the USIBWC to contact the individuals who are selected or who wish to be on the mailing list. Disclosure of the requested information is voluntary. Failure to provide all the requested information may prevent selection to the Citizens' Forum.

Applicant Signature

Date

Please return the completed form by May 6, 2005 to: Sally Spener, USIBWC, 4171 N. Mesa Street, C-100, El Paso, TX 79902 or fax: 915-832-4195.